

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Library attains number one ranking in children's attendance among Kentucky's public libraries

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 7, 2013) – The Union County Public Library children's program ranks number one in Kentucky in attendance among the state's 119 public libraries for state fiscal year 2011-2012, according to the 2013 Statistical Report of Kentucky Public Libraries.

The report provides a top-10 ranking for 16 measures that demonstrate successful libraries in the Commonwealth and includes data from all of the state's public libraries. Children's program attendance per capita at the Union County Public Library is 1.91, while the average per capita children's attendance in Kentucky's public libraries is .29. This number represents the children's program attendance in Union County (28,709) divided by the county population (15,067).

"The Union County Public Library is cultivating future library users by providing exceptional children's services to the youth of Union County," said State Librarian and Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives commissioner Wayne Onkst. "Congratulations to the Union County public library for this achievement and for providing such quality educational programming opportunities."

Union County Public Library Director Debbie McClanahan has a few ideas about how the library achieved the number one ranking in children's program attendance.

"We expanded one little story hour session to a full-blown parent/child interactive session called 'Time4Tots,' which includes story reading, of course, but also music, movement, finger play, crafts and more. We now present Time4Tots at all three library locations, as well as a session at the Shelter of Love, a women's pregnancy care center, where single and low-income mothers attend the session with their children."

The library has also hosted a Prime Time Family Reading Time program, which was attended by 20-25 people for six weeks. Other children's programs, such as the Jared Baker Animal Tales program brought in nearly 500 children with their parents/guardians.

Not only was the library ranked number one for children's program attendance, it was also ranked number one in total library staff. The library averages 11.95 library staff per 10,000 population. The state average is 5.01.

“The Fueling the Mind grant is one example of our library’s dedication to both children’s programming and providing adequate staff to work with children,” said McClanahan. “We used grant funds to hire seven full-time and 13 part-time employees to assist with the program. During this program, our staff served more than 2,000 meals to children.”

Expanding the library’s operating hours by opening the Sturgis and Uniontown library branches hours to Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. helped the library attain the number four ranking in annual public service hours, according to the report. The per capita public service hours for the library are .48, while the state average is .14.

The library also hired extra staff to cover the expanded hours, as well as to staff the extra Time4Tots program.

Additionally, the report ranks the Union County Public Library as number seven in the category of total book collection per attendance. The average for the library is 1.72, while the state average is .44.

The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives provides equitable access to quality library and information resources and services, as well as helps public agencies ensure that legislatively mandated documentation of government programs is created, efficiently maintained and made accessible. For more information on KDLA resources, programs and services visit www.kdla.ky.gov or call 502-564-8300 ext. 315.